

Christian readers and hearers, I am sensible that a reformed language would be excessively strange to them. But may I not allege, without any affectation of paradox, that its being so strange to them would be a proof that it is quite time it were adopted ? For the manner in which some of them would receive this altered dialect, would prove that the customary phraseology had scarcely given them any clear notions. It would be found, as I have observed before, that to them the peculiar phrases had been not so much the vehicles of ideas, as substitutes for them. So undefined has been their understanding of the sense, while they mechanically chimed to the sound, that if they hear the very ideas which these phrases signify, or did or should signify, expressed ever so plainly in other language, they do not recognize them ; and are instantly on the alert with the epithets, sound, orthodox, and all the watch-words of ecclesiastical suspicion. For such Christians, the diction is the convenient asylum of ignorance, indolence, and prejudice.

But I have enlarged far beyond my intention, which was only to represent, with a short illustration, that this peculiar dialect is unfavourable to a cordial reception of evangelical doctrines in minds of cultivated taste. This I know to be a fact from many observations in real life, especially among intellectual young persons, not altogether regardless of serious subjects, and not seduced, though not out of danger of being so, by the cavils against the divine authority of Christianity itself.

After dismissing the consideration of the language, which has unfortunately been made the canonical garb of religion, I meant to have taken a somewhat more general view of the accumulation of bad writing, under which the evangelical theology has been buried ; and which has contributed to bring its principles in disfavour with too many persons of accomplished mental habits. A large proportion of that writing may be sentenced as bad, on more accounts than merely the peculiarity of dialect. But this is an invidious topic, and I shall make only a few observations.

Proofs of an intellect considerably above the common level, with a literary execution disciplined to great correctness, and partaking somewhat of elegance, are requisite on the lowest terms of acceptance for good writing, with cultivated readers. Superlatively

strong sense will indeed command
attention,